MILTON'S MULBERRY TREE

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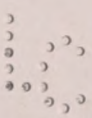
MILTON'S
MULBERRY TREE

AND OTHER STORIES

Illustrated



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TELL ME MY LITTLE MAN WHERE YOU SAW THE BRITISH UNIFORM.

MILTON'S MULBERRY TREE.

DURING the boyhood of Milton there was throughout England much interest in the planting of mulberry trees. James I. had conceived the idea of introducing into his kingdom the manufacture of silk, and in 1608, the year in which Milton was born, had imported from France hundreds of thousands of mulberry trees, the leaves of which furnish appropriate food for silkworms.

Many of them were distributed throughout the country with directions in regard to the planting of them and the rearing of silkworms. Shakespeare, who a few years before had purchased a small estate in his native Stratford-on-Avon, had some of them, and planted one in the garden of his New Place. It flourished there for a hundred and fifty

years, until the place came into the possession of a gentleman who was so much annoyed by the fre-

MILTON AT NINETEEN — WHEN AT CAMBRIDGE.

quent visits of persons desiring to see the poet's tree, that he ordered it to be cut down. When Washington Irving was at Stratford, he met John Ange, a carpenter, then eighty years old, who had assisted in cutting down the tree.

But a large part of the imported trees were

planted under the supervision of the king, on one side of St. James' Park in London, forming the Mulberry Garden. It is not known exactly when the keeping of silkworms there was discontinued, but in time the garden came to be used merely as a public park.

Much information respecting the customs of the seventeenth century has been obtained from the diaries, since published, of two very accomplished gentlemen, John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys. From these diaries it appears that as early as 1649, and as late as 1668, the Mulberry Garden was a place of public resort. Early in the next century, however, it had become the private property of the Duke of Buckingham. Buckingham Palace, the London residence of the Queen, now occupies the site of the famous Mulberry Garden.

Milton was a lover of nature as well as of books. When living in London he always chose a house with land about it, a "garden house," as it was called, which was less difficult to be obtained there two hundred and fifty years ago than now. No doubt he had been interested in the king's mul-

berry plantation, and when he went to reside in Cambridge, it was natural for him to plant a young mulberry tree in the garden of his college, a shoot, very likely, from one of the London trees.

MILTON'S MULBERRY TREE.

It is pleasant for us to imagine the young student's interest in this tree. Of one thing we may be sure. There is no danger that Milton's tree

will share the fate of Shakespeare's. It is still vigorous, producing good fruit in abundance, and it is most carefully tended. Mulberry trees are especially liable to suffer from too much moisture, and the trunk of this one is somewhat decayed; but the defective parts are protected by canvas and sheet-lead. Props have been put under the branches that require support, and a mound covered with grass has been banked up to the height of four feet around the trunk. If a branch falls off, it is divided by the Fellows of the College among themselves. A shoot from the tree has been planted near it.

It was early in the month of September that I visited Christ's College. The mulberries, of which there was an abundance on the tree, were then ripe. A sentinel stood close by keeping strict guard that visitors should not touch the sacred tree. However, no objection was made to our taking some of the leaves and ripe berries that had fallen upon the ground.

While in college Milton was remarkable for his attainments, and even then, was certainly ambi-

tious to become distinguished as a poet; but I suppose that neither he nor any of his associates imagined that this tree would be — just because he planted it — so reverently cherished by the many generations of young men who should come after him at Christ's College; and that it would continue to be for century after century an object of genuine interest to the wisest and best of his countrymen and to pilgrims from other lands, especially to the descendants of those exiles that in 1620, only a few years before, had landed on Plymouth Rock, and, at the time when Milton was in Cambridge, were laying the foundations of civil and religious liberty in a New World.

A HERO.

THEY were sitting by the great blazing wood-fire. It was July, but there was an east wind and the night was chilly. Besides, Mrs. Heath had a piece of fresh pork to roast. Squire Blake had "killed" the day before — that was the term used to signify the slaughter of any domestic animal for food — and had distributed the "fresh" to various families in town, and Mrs. Heath wanted hers for the early breakfast. Meat was the only thing to be had in plenty — meat and berries. Wheat and corn, and vegetables even, were scarce. There had been a long winter, and then, too, every family had sent early in the season all they could possibly spare to the Continental army. As to sugar and tea and molasses, it was many a day since they had had even the taste of them.

The piece of pork was suspended from the ceiling by a stout string, and slowly revolved before the fire, Dorothy or Arthur giving it a fresh start when it showed signs of stopping. There was a settle at right angles with the fireplace, and here the little cooks sat, Dorothy in the corner nearest the fire, and Arthur curled up on the floor at her feet, where he could look up the chimney and see the moon, almost at the full, drifting through the sky. At the opposite corner sat Abram, the hired man and faithful keeper of the family in the absence of its head, at work on an axe helve, while Bathsheba, or "Basha," as she was briefly and affectionately called, was spinning in one corner of the room just within range of the firelight.

There was no other light—the firelight being sufficient for their needs—and it was necessary to economize in candles, for any day a raid from the royal army might take away both cattle and sheep, and then where would the tallow come from for the annual fall candle-making? There was a rumor —Abram had brought it home that very day—that the royal army were advancing, and red coats might

make their appearance in Hartland at any time. Arthur and Dorothy were talking about it, as they turned the roasting fork.

"Wish I was a man," said Arthur, glancing towards his mother, who was sitting in a low splint chair knitting stockings for her boy's winter wear. "I'd like to shoot a red coat."

"O Arty!" exclaimed Dorothy reproachfully; "you're always thinking of shooting! Now *I* should like to nurse a sick soldier and wait upon him. Poor soldiers! it was dreadful what papa wrote to mamma about them."

"Would you nurse a red coat?" asked Arthur, indignantly.

"Yes," said Dorothy. "Though of course I should rather, a great deal rather, nurse one of our own soldiers. But Arty," continued the little elder sister, "papa says if we must fight, why, we must fight bravely, but that we can be brave without fighting."

"Well, I mean to be a hero, and heroes always fight. King Arthur fought. Papa said so. He and his knights fought for the Sangreal, and liberty

is our Sangreal. I'm glad my name is Arthur, anyhow, for Arthur means noble and high," he said, lifting his bright boyish face with its steadfast blue eyes, and glancing again towards his mother. She gave an answering smile.

"I hope my boy will always be noble and high in thought and deed. But, as papa said, to be a hero one does not need to fight, at least, not to fight men. We can fight bad tempers and bad thoughts and cowardly impulses. They who fight these things successfully are the truest heroes, my boy."

"Ah, but mamma, didn't I hear you tell grandmamma how you were proud of your hero. That's what you called papa when General Montgomery wrote to you, with his own hand, how he drove back the enemy at the head of his men, while the balls were flying and the cannons roaring and flashing; and when his horse was shot under him how he struggled out and cheered on his men, on foot, and the bullets whizzed and the men fell all around him, and he wasn't hurt and"— Here the boy stopped abruptly and sprang impulsively forward,

for his mother's cheek had suddenly grown pale.

"True grit!" remarked Abram to Basha, in an undertone, as she paused in her walk to and fro by the spinning-wheel to join a broken thread. "But there never was a coward yet, man or woman, 'mong the Heaths, an' I've known 'em off an' on these seventy year. Now there was ole Gineral Heath," he continued, holding up the axe helve and viewing it critically with one eye shut, "he was a marster hand for fightin'. Fit the Injuns 's though he liked it. That gun up there was his'n."

"Tell us about the 'sassy one,'" said Arthur, turning at the word gun.

"Youngster, 'f I've tole yer that story once, I've tole yer fifty times," said Abram.

"Tell it again," said the boy eagerly. "And take down the gun, too."

Abram got up as briskly as his seventy years and his rheumatism would permit, and took down the gun from above the mantel-piece. It was a very large one.

"Not quite so tall as the old Gineral himself," said Abram, "but a purty near to it. This gun is

'bout seven feet, an' yer gran'ther was seven feet two — a powerful built man. Wall, the Injuns had been mighty obstreperous 'long 'bout that time, burnin' the Widder Brown's house and her an' her baby a-hidin' in a holler tree near by, an' carryin' off critters an' hosses, an' that day yer gran'ther was after 'em with a posse o' men, an' what did that pesky Injun do but git up on a rock a quarter o' a mile off an' jestickerlate in an outrigerus manner, like a sarcy boy, an' yer gran'ther, he took aim and fired, an' that impident Injun jest tumbled over with a yell; his last, mind ye, and good enough for him!"

"I like to hear about old gran'ther," said Arthur.

As Abram was restoring the gun to its place upon the hooks, a sound was heard at the side door — a sound as of a heavy body falling against it, which startled them all. The dog Cæsar rose, and going to the door which opened into the side entry, sniffed along the crack above the threshold. Apparently satisfied, he barked softly, and rising on his hind legs lifted the latch and sprang into the entry. Abram followed with Basha. As he lifted

the latch of the outer door — the string had been drawn in early, as was the custom in those troublous times — and swung it back, the light from the fire fell upon the figure of a man lying across the doorstone.

"Sakes alive!" exclaimed Abram, drawing back. But at a word from the mistress, they lifted the man and brought him in and laid him down on the braided woollen mat before the fire. Then for a moment there was silence, for he wore the dress of a British soldier, and his right arm was bandaged. He had fainted from loss of blood, apparently — perhaps from hunger. Basha loosened his coat at the throat, and tried to force a drop or two of "spirits" into his mouth, while Mrs. Heath rubbed his hands.

"He ain't dead," said Basha, in a grim tone, "and mind you, we'll see trouble from this." Basha was an arrant rebel, and hated the very sight of a red coat. "What are you doin' here," she continued, addressing him, "killin' honest folks, when you'd better 've staid cross seas in yer own country?"

"Basha!" said Mrs. Heath reprovingly, "he is helpless."

But Basha as she unwound the tight bandage

from the shattered arm, kept muttering to herself like a rising tempest, until at length the man having come quite to himself, detected her feeling, and with great effort said, "I am *not* a British soldier."

"Then what to goodness have you got on their uniform for?" queried Basha.

Little by little the pitiful story was told. He was an American soldier who had been doing duty as a spy in the British camp. Up to the very last day of his stay he had not been suspected; but trying to get away he was suspected, challenged, and fired at. The shot passed through his arm. He was certain his pursuers had followed him till night, and they would be likely to continue the search the next day, and he begged Mrs. Heath to secrete him for a day or two, if possible.

"I wouldn't mind being shot, marm," he said, "but you know they'll hang me if they get me. Of course I risked it when I went into their camp, but it's none the pleasanter for all that."

Now in the old Heath house there was a secret chamber, built in the side of the chimney. Most of those old colonial houses had enormous chimneys,

that took up, sometimes, a quarter of the ground occupied by the house, so it was not a difficult thing to enclose a small space with slight danger of its existence being detected. This chamber chimney in the Heath house was little more than a closet eight feet by four. It was entered from the north chamber, Abram's room, through a narrow sliding panel that looked exactly like the rest of the wall, which was of cedar boards. An inch-wide shaft running up the side of the chimney ventilated the closet, and it was lighted by a window consisting of three small panes of glass carefully concealed under the projecting roof. In a sunny day one could see to read there easily.

A small cot-bed was now carried into this room, and up there, after his wound had been dressed by Basha, who, like many old-time women, was skilful in dressing wounds and learned in the properties of herbs and roots, and he had been fed and bathed, the soldier was taken; and a very grateful man he was as he settled himself upon the bed and looked up with a smiling "thank you," into Basha's face, which longer grim and forbidding.

All this time no special notice had been taken of Dorothy and Arthur. They had followed about to watch the bathing, feeding and tending, and when Mrs. Heath turned to leave the secret chamber, she found them behind her, staring in with very wide-open eyes indeed; for, if you can believe it, they never before had even heard of, much less seen, this lovely little secret chamber. It was never deemed wise in colonial families to talk about these hiding-places, which sometimes served so good a purpose, and I doubt if many adults in the town of Hartland knew of this secret chamber in the Heath house.

The panel was closed, and Abram was left to care for the wounded soldier through the night. It was nine o'clock, the colonial hour for going to bed, and long past the children's hour, and Dotty and Arthur in their prayers by their mother's knee, put up a petition for the safety of the stranger.

"*Would* they hang him if they could get him, mamma?" asked Arty.

"Certainly," she replied. "It is one of the rules of warfare. A spy is always hung."

In the morning, from nine to eleven, Mrs. Heath always devoted to the children's lessons. Arthur, who was eleven, was a good Latin scholar. He was reading *Cæsar's Commentaries*, and he liked it —that is, he liked the story part. He found some of it pretty tough reading, and I need not tell you boys who have read Cæsar, what parts those were. They had English readings from the *Spectator*, and from Bishop Leighton's works, books which you know but little about. Dotty had a daily lesson in botany, and very pleasant hours those school hours were.

After dinner, at twelve, they had the afternoon for play. That afternoon, the day after the soldier came, they went berrying. They did this almost every day during berry time, so as to have what they liked better than anything for supper—berries and milk. Occasionally they had huckleberry "slap-jacks," also a favorite dish, for breakfast; not often, however, as flour was scarce.

They went for berries down the road known as South Lane, a lonely place, but where berries grew plentifully. Their mother had cautioned them not

to talk about the occurrence of the night before, as some one might overhear, and so, though they talked about their play and their studies, about papa and his soldiers, they said nothing about *the* soldier.

They had nearly filled their baskets, when a growl from Cæsar startled them, and turning, they saw two horsemen who had stopped near by, one of whom was just springing from his horse. They were in British uniform, and the children at once were sure what they wanted.

"O Arty, Arty!" whispered Dorothy. "They've come, and we mustn't tell."

The man advanced with a smile meant to be pleasant, but which was in reality so sinister that the children shrank with a sensation of fear.

"How are you, my little man? Picking berries, eh? And where do you live?" he asked.

"With mamma," answered Arthur promptly.

"And who is mamma? What is her name?"

"Mrs. Heath," said Arty.

"And don't you live with papa too? Where is papa?" the man asked.

Arthur hesitated an instant, and then out it came,

and proudly too. "In the Continental army, sir."

"Ho! ho! and so we are a little rebel, are we?" laughed the man. "And who am I? Do you know?"

"Yes, sir; a British soldier."

"How do you know that?"

"Because you wear their uniform, sir?"

"You cannot have seen many British soldiers here," said the man. "Did you ever see the British uniform before?"

"Yes, sir," replied Arty.

"And where did you see it?" he asked, glancing sharply at Arthur and then at Dorothy. Upon the face of the latter was a look of dismay, for she had foreseen the drift of the man's questions and the trap into which Arty had fallen. He, too, saw it, now he was in. The only British uniform he had ever seen was that worn by the American spy. For a brief moment he was tempted to tell a lie. Then he said firmly, "I cannot tell you, sir."

"Cannot! Does that mean will not?" said the man threateningly. Then he put his hand into his pocket and took out a bright gold sovereign, which he held before Arthur.

"Come, now, my little man, tell me where you saw the British soldier's uniform, and you shall have this gold piece."

But all the noble impulses of the boy's nature inherited and strengthened by his mother's teachings, revolted at this attempt to bribe him. His eyes flashed. He looked the man full in the face. "I will not!" said he.

"Come, come!" cried out the man on horseback. "Don't palter any longer with the little rebel. We'll find a way to make him tell. Up with him!"

In an instant the man had swung Arthur into his saddle, and leaping up behind him, struck spurs to his horse and dashed away. Cæsar, who had been sniffing about, suspicious, but uncertain, attempted to leap upon the horseman in the rear, but he, drawing his pistol from his saddle, fired, and Cæsar dropped helpless.

The horsemen quickly vanished, and for a moment Dorothy stood pale and speechless. Then she knelt down by Cæsar, examined his wound—he was shot in the leg—and bound it up with her handkerchief, just as she saw Basha do the night before, and then

putting her arms around his neck she kissed him. "Be patient, dear old Cæsar, and Abram shall come for you?"

Covered with dust, her frock stained with Cæsar's blood, a pitiful sight indeed was Dorothy as she burst into the kitchen where Basha was preparing supper.

"O mamma, they've carried off Arty and shot Cæsar, those dreadful, dreadful British!"

Between her sobs she told the whole fearful story to the two women—fearful, I say, for Mrs. Heath knew too well the reputed character of the British soldiery, not to fear the worst if her boy should persist in refusing to tell where he had seen the British soldier's uniform. But even in her distress she was conscious of a proud faith that he would not betray his trust.

As to Basha, who shall describe her horror and indignation? "The wretches! ain't they content to murder our men and burn our houses, that they must take our innercent little boys?" and she struck the spit into the chicken she was preparing for supper vindictively, as though thus she should like

to treat the whole British army. "The dear little cretur! what'll he do to-night without his mamma, and him never away from her a night in his blessed life. 'Pears to me the Lord's forgot the Colonies. O dearie, dearie me!" utterly overcome she dropped into a chair, and throwing her homespun check apron over her head, she gave way to such a fit of weeping as astonished and perplexed Abram, one of whose principle articles of faith it was that Basha couldn't shed a tear, even if she tried, "mor'n if she's made o' cast iron."

It indeed looked hopeless. Who was to follow after these men and rescue Arthur? There was hardly any one left in town but old men, women and children.

Mrs. Heath thought of this as she soothed Dorothy, coaxed her to eat a little supper, and then sat by her side until she fell asleep. She sat by the fire while the embers died out, or walked up and down the long, lonely kitchen, wrestling, like Jacob, in prayer, for her boy, until long after midnight.

And now let us follow Arthur's fortunes. The men galloped hard and long over hills, through

valleys and woods, so far away it seemed to the little fellow he could never possibly see mamma or Dorothy again. At last they drew up at a large white house, evidently the headquarters of the officers, and Arthur was put at once into a dark closet and there left. He was tired and dreadfully hungry, so hungry that he could think of hardly anything else. He heard the rattling of china and glasses, and knew they were at supper. By and by a servant came and took him into the supper room. His eyes were so dazzled at first by the change from the dark closet to the well-lighted room, that he could scarcely see. But when the daze cleared he found himself standing near the head of the table, where sat a stout man with a red face, a fierce mustache, and an evil pair of eyes.

He looked at Arthur a moment. Then he poured out a glass of wine and pushed it towards him: "Drink!"

But Arthur did not touch the glass.

"Drink, I say," he repeated impatiently. "Do you hear?"

"I have promised mamma never to drink wine," was the low response.

It seemed to poor Arthur as though everything had combined against him. It was bad enough to have to say no to the question about the uniform, and now here was something else that would make the men still more angry with him. But the officer did not push his command; he simply thrust the glass one side and said, "Now, my boy, we're going to get that American spy and hang him. You know where he is and you've got to tell us, or it will be the worse for you. Do you want to see your mother again?"

Arthur did not answer. He could not have answered just then. A big bunch came into his throat. Cry? Not before these men. So he kept silence.

"Obstinate little pig! speak!" thundered the officer, bringing his great brawny fist down upon the table with a blow that set the glasses dancing. "Will you tell me where that spy is?"

"No, sir," came in very low, but very firm tones. I will not tell you the dreadful words of that officer, as he turned to his servant with the command, "Put him down cellar, and we'll see to him in the morning.

They're all alike, men, women and children. Rebellion in the very blood. The only way to finish it is to spill it without mercy."

Now there was one thing that Arthur, brave as he was, feared, and that was—rats! Left on a heap of dry straw, he began to wonder if there were rats there. Presently he was sure he heard something move, but he was quickly reassured by the touch of soft, warm fur on his hand, and the sound of a melodious "pur-r." The friendly kitty, glad of a companion, curled herself by his side. What comfort she brought to the lonely little fellow! He lay down beside her, and saying his *Our Father*, and *Now I lay me*, was soon in a profound sleep, the purring little kitty nestling close.

The sounds of revelry in the rooms above did not disturb him. The boisterous songs and laughter, the stamping of many feet, continued far into the night. At last they ceased; and when everything had been for a long time silent, the door leading to the cellar was softly opened and a lady came down the stairway. I have often wished that I might paint her as she looked coming down those

stairs. Arthur was afterwards my great-grandfather, you know, and he told me this story when I was a young girl in my teens. He told me how lovely this lady was.

Her gown was of some rich stuff that shimmered in the light of the candle she carried, and rustled musically as she walked. There was a flash of jewels at her throat and on her hands. She had wrapped a crimson mantle about her head and shoulders. Her eyes were like stars on a summer's night, sparkling with a veiled radiance, and as she stood and looked down upon the sleeping boy, a smile, sweet, but full of a profound sadness, played upon her lips. Then a determined look came into her bright eyes.

He stirred in his sleep, laughed out, said "mamma," and then opened his eyes. She stooped and touched his lips with her finger. "Hush! Speak only in a whisper. Eat this, and then I will take you to your mother."

After he had eaten, she wrapped a cloak about him, and together they stole up and out past the sleeping, drunken sentinel, to the stables. She lead

out a white horse, her own horse, Arthur was sure, for the creature caressed her with his head, and as she saddled him she talked to him in low tones, sweet, musical words of some foreign tongue. The handsome horse seemed to understand the necessity of silence, for he did not even whinny to the touch of his mistress' hand, and trod daintily and noiselessly as she led him to the mounting block, his small ears pricking forward and backward, as though knowing the need of watchful listening.

Leaping to the saddle and stooping, she lifted Arthur in front of her, and with a word they were off. A slow walk at first, and then a rapid canter. Arthur never forgot that long night ride with the beautiful lady on the white horse, over the country flooded with the brilliancy of the full moon. Once or twice she asked if he was cold, as she drew the cloak more closely about him, and sometimes she would murmur softly to herself words in that silvery, foreign tongue. As they drew near Hartland, she asked him to point out his father's house, and when they were quite near, only a little distance off, she stopped the horse.

"I leave you here, you brave, darling boy," she said. "Kiss me once, and then jump down. And don't forget me.',

Arthur threw his arms around her neck and kissed her, first on one cheek and then on the other, and looking up into the beautiful face with its starry eyes, said—

"I will never, never forget you, for you are the loveliest lady I ever saw except—except mamma."

She laughed a pleased laugh, like a child, then took a ring from her hand and put it upon one of Arthur's fingers. Her hand was so slender it fitted his chubby little hand very well.

"Keep this," she said, "and by and by give it to some lady good and true, like mamma."

"Will you be punished?" he said, keeping her hand. She laughed again, with a proud, daring toss of her dainty head, and rode away.

Arthur watched her out of sight, and then turned towards home. Mrs. Heath was still keeping her lonely watch, when the latch of the outer door was softly lifted—nobody had the heart to take in the string with Arty outside—the inner door swung

noiselessly back, and a blithe voice said, "Mamma! mamma! here I am, and I didn't tell!"

All that day, and the next, and the next, the Heath household were in momentary expectation of the coming of the red coats to search for the spy. Dorothy and Arthur, and sometimes Abram, did picket duty to give seasonable warning of their approach. But they never came. In a few days news was brought that the British forces, on the very morning after Arthur's return, had made a rapid retreat before an advance of the Federal troops, and never again was a red coat seen in Hartland. The spy got well in great peace and comfort under Basha's nursing, and went back again to do service in the Continental army, and Dotty used to say, "You did learn, didn't you, Arty, how a person, even a little boy, can be a hero without fighting, just as mamma said?"

AUNT POLLY SHEDD'S BRIGADE.

"SOMETHING about the Battle of Hampden?" Grandma took off her spectacles and wiped them reflectively. "It seems to me already I have told you everything worth telling; but there!" in a sudden burst of recollection, "did I ever tell you about Aunt Polly Shedd's Brigade? That was quite an affair to those of us that belonged to it!"

"Oh, no! do tell us about it!" called out the three childish voices in chorus; and grandma only waited to knit by the seam needle.

"I've told you all about it so many times that I don't need to describe again that dreadful morning when the British man-of-war came up the river and, dropping her anchor just opposite our little village of Hampden, sent troops ashore to take

possession of the place in the King's name. So what I am going to tell you now is how, and where, we youngsters spent the three days that the British occupied our houses. I was about twelve years old at the time. I remember that it was just as we were getting up from the breakfast-table that one of our neighbors, Sol Grant, old General Grant's youngest son, rushed in without knocking, his face as white as a sheet, and his cap on hind-side before, and called out hurriedly:

"'Mr. Swett, if you love your family, for God's sake find a place of safety for 'em! The British are coming ashore — three boat-loads of 'em, armed to the teeth — and they won't spare man, woman nor child.'

"Mother's face grew very pale, but she stepped quietly around, with her baby on her arm, close to where father was standing, and laid one hand on his arm, while she said, in a firm, clear voice:

"'*My* place is with you, Benjamin, but we must think of some place of safety for the children. Where can they go?'

"Sol was just rushing out of the door as uncere-

moniously as he had rushed in, but he stopped when he heard her ask that, long enough to say :

"'I forgot to tell you that Aunt Polly Shedd will take all the children put in her charge out to Old Gubtil's ; that's so out of the way they won't be disturbed, 'specially as the old man's a tory himself.'

"Mother kissed us all round, with a smile on her face that couldn't quite hide the tears with which her dear eyes were filled, and as she hastily bundled us in whatever garment came to hand, she bade us be good children, and make aunt Polly and the Gubtils as little trouble as possible. Then we followed father out-of-doors and into the schoolhouse yard where a score or more of children were already gathered — still as mice for intense terror. Aunt Polly, in her big green calash, and a pillowcase of valuables under one arm, was bustling to and fro, speaking an encouraging or admonitory word, as the case might be, and wearing upon her pinched, freckled little face such a reassuring smile that I soon felt my own courage rise and, dashing back the tears that had filled my eyes a moment

before, I busied myself in pinning little Sally's blanket more closely about her neck and setting the faded sunbonnet upon the tangled curls that had not yet had their customary morning's dressing.

"'Come, children,' called out aunt Polly cheerily, 'you're all here now, and we'll start right off. I'll go ahead, an' all you little ones had best keep close to me; the bigger ones can come along behind.'

"Obedient to her order we started, following her steps across the road by the beeches, and up by the grocery store where a crowd of excited men were congregated, talking loudly with wild gesticulations, while farther down, toward the shore, we could catch glimpses, through the thick morning fog, of the blue uniforms of our militia company that had been summoned in hot haste to defend the town. As we filed past, I remember I heard one of the men on the grocery steps speak:

"'I tell you they won't leave one stone on another if they get possession of the town, and they'll impress all the able-bodied men and all the big boys into the King's service besides.'

"A cold shiver ran over me and I caught so hard at little Sally's hand that the child cried out with pain, and aunt Polly said anxiously:

"'Hurry up, dears! 'tain't much more'n a mile out to Gubtil's, and you'll have a good nice chance to rest after we get there.'

"Just then the martial music of a fife and drum announced the landing of the enemy's troops, and I tell you it quickened the lagging footsteps of even the youngest child into a run, and we just flew, helter-skelter, over the rough, little-used road that led to the Gubtil farm. Aunt Polly's gentle tones were unheeded. All she could do was to carry the weakest in her arms over all the worst places, with a word of cheer, now and then, to some child who was not too much frightened to heed it.

"What a haven of safety the low, unpainted old farmhouse looked to us, as we rushed, pell-mell, into the dooryard, never noticing, in our own relief, the ungracious scowl with which the master and mistress of the house regarded our advent.

"Aunt Polly soon explained matters, taking

care to assure the inhospitable pair that our parents would amply recompense them for the trouble and expense we must, of course, be to them.

"The farmer held a whispered consultation with his wife, and I remember well his harsh, loud tones as he came back to aunt Polly:

"'They'll *have* to stay, I s'pose; there don't seem no help for it now. There's pertaters in the cellar, an' they can roast an' eat what they want. I'll give 'em salt an' what milk an' brown bread they want, an' that's what they'll have to live on for the present. As for housin' 'em, the boys can sleep on the hay in the barn, an' the girls can camp down on rugs an' comforters on the kitchen floor. That's the best I can do, an' if they ain't satisfied they can go furder.'

"I remember just how he looked down at the troubled, childish faces upturned to his own, as if half hoping we might conclude to wander yet farther away from our imperilled homes; but aunt Polly hastened to answer:

"'Oh, we'll get along nicely with milk for the little ones, and potatoes and salt for the big boys

and girls, and we won't trouble you any more nor any longer than we can help, Mr. Gubtil.'

"She stood upon the door-stone beside him as she spoke, a little, bent, slightly deformed figure, with a face shrivelled and faded like a winter-russet apple in spring-time, and a dress patched and darned till one scarcely could tell what the original was like, in a striking contrast to the tall, broad-shouldered, hale old man, whose iron frame had defied the storms of more than seventy winters; but I remember how he seemed to me a mere pigmy by the side of the generous, large-hearted woman whose tones and gestures had a protectiveness, a strength born of love and pity, that reassured us trembling little fugitives in spite of our ungracious reception. We felt that aunt Polly would take care of us, let what would come.

"The hours dragged slowly away. Aunt Polly told us that the distant firing meant that our men had not retreated without an effort to defend the village. When this firing ceased, we began to watch and hope that some message would come from our fathers and mothers. But none came

We wondered among our little selves if they all had been put to death by the British, and even the oldest among us shed some dreary tears.

"Dan Parsons, who was the biggest boy among us and of an adventurous turn, went in the gathering twilight gloom down as near the village as he dared. He came shivering back to us with such tales of vague horror that our very hearts stopped beating while we listened.

"'I crep' along under the shadder of the alders and blackberry bushes,' he began, 'til I got clost ter De'con Mileses house. 'Twas as still as death 'round there, but jest as I turned the corner by the barn I see somethin' gray a-flappin' and a-flutterin' jest inside the barn door. I stopped, kind o' wonderin' what it could be, when all at once I thought I should 'a' dropped, for it came over me like a flash that it might be'—

"'What, what, Dan?' cried a score of frightened voices; and Dan replied solemnly:

"'*The old deacon's skulp!*'

"'Oh dear! oh dear!' sobbed the terrified chorus.

"Aunt Polly could do nothing with us; and little Dolly Miles, the deacon's granddaughter, burst into a series of wild lamentations that called Farmer Gubtil to the door to know the cause of the commotion.

"'What's all this hullabaloo about?' he asked crossly; and when he had heard the story he seized Dan and shook him till his teeth chattered.

"'What do you mean by tellin' such stuff an' scarin' these young ones ter death?' he demanded.

"Dan wriggled himself from his grasp and looked sulkily defiant:

"'I didn't say *'twas* that,' he muttered. 'I said it *might* be, an' p'r'aps 'twas; or it *might* 'a' been the deacon's old mare switchin' 'er tail ter keep off the flies. I'm sure *I* don't know which 'twas. But girls are always a-squealin' at nothin'.'

"And with this parting fling at us tearful ones, Dan turned in the direction of the barn; but I was too anxious to hear from father and mother to let him go without a word more. 'Dan,' I whispered with my hand on his arm, 'did you see or hear anything of *our* folks?'

"'No!' was the rather grumpy reply; 'after what I saw at the deacon's I didn't want ter ventur' furder, but from there I could see 'em lightin' fires in the village, an' I don't doubt by this time that most o' the houses is in flames.'

"With this comforting assurance Dan went off to his bed upon the haymow, and I crept back into the house and laid my tired head down upon aunt Polly's motherly lap, where, between my sobs, I managed to tell what Dan had told me.

"Aunt Polly laid a caressing hand upon my hair: "La, child,' said she soothingly, 'don't you worry yourself a bit over Dan Parson's stories. That boy was *born* to tell stories. The Britishers are bad enough, but they ain't heathen savages, an' if the town has surrendered, as I calc'late it has, the settlers will be treated like prisoners o' war. There won't be no sculpin' nor burnin' o' houses — no, dear. And now,' giving me a little reassuring pat, 'you're all tired out, an' ought ter be asleep. I'll make you up a bed on this rug with a cushion under your head, an' my big plaid

shawl over you, an' you'll sleep jest as sound as if you was ter home in your own trundle-bed.'

"Little Sally shared my rug and shawl, and aunt Polly, gently refusing the ungracious civility of the old couple, who had offered her the use of their spare bedroom, after seeing every little, tired form made as comfortable as possible with quilts and blankets from the farmwife's stores, laid herself down upon the floor beside us, and after commending herself and us to the God she loved and trusted, raised her head and spoke to us once more in her sweet, hopeful, quavering old tones:

"'Good night, dears! Go to sleep and don't be a bit afraid. I shouldn't wonder if your folks come for you in the mornin'.'

"What comfort there was in her words! And even the very little ones, who had never been away from their mothers a night before in their lives, stopped their low sobbing and nestled down to sleep, sure that God and aunt Polly would let no harm come to them.

"The next day passed slowly and anxiously for us all. From a stray traveller aunt Polly learned

"THERE WON'T BE NO SCULPIN' OR BURNIN', DEAR."

that the village was still in the hands of the British and — what was no little comfort to us —

MR. GUBTIL AND HIS ACCOUNT-BOOK.

that no violence had been done to the place or its inhabitants. Some of the older boys were for venturing to return, but aunt Polly held them back

with her prudent arguments. If their parents had considered it safe for them to come home they would have sent for them. The British, she said, had been known to impress boys, as well as men, into service, and the wisest way was to keep out of their sight.

"The gentle, motherly advice prevailed, and even Dan Parsons contented himself with climbing the tallest trees in the vicinity, from which he could see the chimneys of several of the nearest houses. From these pinnacles he would call out to us at intervals:

"'The smoke comin' out o' Deacon Mileses chimly has a queer look, somethin' like burnin' feathers! I shouldn't wonder a mite if them Britishers was burnin' up his furnitoor! Sam Kelly's folks hain't had a spark o' fire in their fireplace to-day. Poor critters! Mebbe there ain't nobody left ter want one.'

"With these dismal surmises, Dan managed to keep our forlorn little flock as uncomfortable as even he could wish; and as the second night drew on, I suppose the homesickness of the smaller ones

must have been pitiful to see. Aunt Polly patted and cuddled the forlorn little things to the best of her ability, but it was past midnight before the last weary, sobbing baby was fairly asleep, while all night long one or another would start up terrified from some frightful dream, to be soothed into quiet by the patient motherly tenderness of their wakeful protector.

"Next morning the brow of the farmer wore an ominous frown, and his wife, as she distributed to each the scant measure of brown bread and milk remarked, grudgingly, that she should think 'twas 'bout time that her house was cleared of a crowd o' hungry, squallin' young ones; and then Mr. Gubtil took out his account-book and wrote down the name of each child, with an estimate of the amount of bread, milk and potatoes consumed by each. He did this with the audible remark that 'if folks thought he was a-feedin' an' a-housin' their young ones for nothin' they'd find themselves mightily mistaken.'

"The third morning dragged slowly away. Dinner was over and still no message for us forlorn

little ones. At last aunt Polly slowly arose from her seat upon the doorstep, with the light of a strong, courageous resolve on her little face.

"'Children!' she called loudly, and after we had gathered at her call, she spoke to us with an encouraging smile:

"'I've made up my mind that 'twon't be best for us to stay here another night. We're in the way, and the little ones would be better off at home with their mothers. We know that the fightin' is all over, and I don't believe that the English soldiers'll be bad enough to hurt a lot o' little helpless children, 'specially if they're under a flag o' truce.'

"Here she drew a handkerchief from her pocket. This she fastened carefully to a stick. Then putting it into the hands of my brother Ben, a well-grown lad of twelve, she went on with her directions:

"'We'll form in procession, just as we came, and you, Benjie, may march at the head with this white flag a-wavin' to let them know that we come in peace. I'll follow next with the biggest boys, an'

AUNT POLLY GIVES BENJIE A FLAG OF TRUCE.

the girls, with the little ones, must keep behind where it's safest.'

"Perhaps it was the contagion of aunt Polly's cheerful courage, but more likely it was the blessed hope of seeing home and father and mother again, that made the little folks so prompt to obey her directions. We formed ourselves in line in less time than it takes to tell about it; we elder girls took charge of the wee ones who were so rejoiced to leave the inhospitable roof of the Gubtils' that they forgot all their fears of the terrible English, and trotted along as blithely over the deserted road as if not a fear had ever terrified their childish hearts, and as if English soldiers were still simply those far-off monsters that had served as bugbears to frighten them now and then into obedience to maternal authority.

"The Gubtils watched us off without a word of encouragement or friendliness. Aunt Polly walked close behind the flag-bearer with a firm step, but I could see that she was very pale, and when we came to descend the little hill that led into the village, and when just at its foot, where then stood the

grocery of old Penn Parker, we caught a glimpse of the scarlet uniforms of several soldiers loafing about — then even we children could see that her steps faltered; and I remember I thought she was fearful of some violence.

"But the next moment she was walking steadily along again as if no thought of danger or retreat had ever entered her mind; and as we came opposite the grocery and a tall man in an officer's uniform strolled out toward us with a curious, questioning look upon his handsome face, she gave the word of command to her little brigade in a voice as clear as a bell:

"'Halt, children!'

"We all stood still as mice, eying the stranger with looks in which fear and admiration were probably curiously blended, while aunt Polly, taking the white flag from her color-bearer, advanced with a firm front to meet the foe who now, reinforced by several men, stood beside the way, evidently wondering what this queer parade was about.

"'Sir!' and aunt Polly's voice trembled perceptibly but she waved the white flag manfully

under his very nose, 'sir, I demand a safe passage for these innocent children to their different homes.'

"The officer stared, and his mouth twitched mischievously as if he had hard work to keep from laughing outright. But he was a gentleman; and when he spoke, he spoke like one.

"'My good woman,' he said kindly, 'these children are nothing to me. If you wish permission for them to go to their own homes you are welcome to it, though in what way the matter concerns me I must confess I am at a loss to imagine.

"Then, and not till then, aunt Polly broke down and sobbed aloud:

"'Run, children!' she cried as soon as she could speak; 'go home just as fast as you can scud; an' tell your folks,' she added with a gust of gratitude, 'that there's worse folks in the world than an Englishman.'

"You may be sure that we waited for no further urging; and as we flew, rather than ran, in the direction of our different homes, I heard the irrepressible burst of laughter with which the officer

and his men received the grateful spinster's compliment which, to the day of her death, she loved to repeat whenever she told the thrilling story of her adventure with the English officer, 'when Hampden was took by the British in 1814;' always concluding with this candid admission:

"'An' really, now, if he'd 'a' been anybody but an Englishman, an' an inimy, I should 'a' said that I never sot eyes on a better-built, more mannerly man, in all my born days.'"

THE INVISIBLE PAINTER.

ONE fine spring morning, a great many years ago, five or six young men were assembled in a large painting-room in one of the great Spanish cities, while a grave, dark-haired, rather sad-looking man, in a rich dress of purple velvet, was going from picture to picture, and saying a few words upon each, to which his pupils listened very respectfully. — And well they might; for this man was himself one of the greatest painters living, and his name was Esteban (Stephen) Murillo.

But it was plain that the pupils had not been working as well as usual that day; for Murillo had a great deal of fault-finding to do. One student had painted an arm wrong; another had spoiled the effect of his sunset; a third had made a bad fault in the shading of his sky; and so on, and so

on, till at last the master lost patience altogether, and cried angrily:

"Really, gentlemen, this is too bad! You don't seem to remember anything that I tell you. If you can't do better than this, that poor little monkey of a Sebastian, yonder, has a good chance of becoming a painter as any of you!"

The "poor little monkey" was a Moorish lad of fourteen, one of Murillo's servants, who had to sweep out the painting-room, grind the students' colors for them, and do other jobs about the house. His face flushed as he heard his master speak so contemptuously of him; but he said nothing.

When the pupils came in the next morning, one or two of them noticed that their pictures were not where they had left them; and Manuel Suarez, a little black-eyed fellow with a pretty hot temper of his own, found his brushes all smeared with paint, and flew into a passion at once:

"The Zombi* must have been at work here!" shouted he, shaking his fist; "I cleaned these

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*A mischievous fairy of the "Robin Goodfellow" sort, supposed to play tricks at night.

brushes myself last night, and look at them now!"

"And he seems to have been at *me* too," cried another, "for here's a child's head on my canvas, which is none of *my* doing!"

"Well," yawned José Villavicemio, the laziest of the whole school, "if it *is* the Zombi, I wish he'd just put in the face of my St. Catherine while he is about it, for I'm sure *I* can't. Hollo!"

Well might he cry "hollo!" There, on his canvas, instead of the blurred, unfinished head that he had left there the night before, was a face so beautiful, so admirably painted, and yet so light and delicate, that the whole six stared at it in silent astonishment.

At that moment the door opened, and in came Murillo.

"Ha, Villavicemio!" cried he, looking from the picture to his lazy pupil, "this is better than I expected of *you!*"

"But it wasn't I who did it, master — more's the pity!"

"Not you? Who was it, then?"

"That's just what none of us can tell, Senor Don Esteban; we found it here when we came."

"Hum," said Murillo. "Well, we can talk of that again; let us get to work now."

But, from that day forth, it really seemed as if some mischievous fairy *had* taken Murillo's studio for his playground. Half-completed pictures were finished no one knew how — loose strips of canvas were covered with admirable portraits of the various pupils — and one morning there appeared on the wall a capital likeness of Murillo, at which the great master himself smiled approvingly. But all these paintings were so much better than anything which the students themselves could do, that they were completely puzzled.

However, Murillo was not the man to let such pranks be played upon him for nothing; and one evening he said to his class:

"It's time to put a stop to these tricks, gentlemen. Whoever this invisible painter may be, he's a man like ourselves; and our best way is to come an hour earlier to-morrow, and try if we can't catch him at work."

And so they did, sure enough; for when they came next morning, there, seated before one of the pictures, and so intent upon his work that he did not even hear the door open, was the "poor little monkey," Sebastian!"

It would be hard to say which was the more astounded — Sebastian to find himself caught, or Murillo and his pupils to see who their "fairy" really was.

"Who taught you to paint, boy?" asked Murillo at length.

"You, master," replied Sebastian timidly.

"Why, I never gave you a lesson in my life!"

"No, master; but I listened to what you told these gentlemen, and remembered it."

"And you have fairly beaten us all!" burst out Suarez, in his headlong way. "Bravo Sebastian!"

"Bravo Sebastian!" echoed all the rest.

"God bless thee, my son," said Murillo, laying his hand tenderly on the boy's head. "I have made something far better than a picture this time — I have made a painter! Henceforth thou shalt be

called no more Sebastian Gomez, but 'El Mucacho de Murillo'" (Murillo's Boy).

And although Sebastian Gomez afterwards became a famous painter (as you may see by the pictures which he has left behind him) he was known as "Murillo's Boy" to the end of his life.

TWO PERSIAN SCHOOLBOYS.

"WAKE, Otanes, wake, the Magi are singing the morning hymn to Mithras. Quick, or we shall be late at the exercises, and father promised, if we did well, we should go to the chase with him to-day."

"And perhaps shoot a lion. What a feather in our caps that would be! Is it pleasant?"

Smerdis pulled open the shutters that closed the windows, and the first rays of the sun sparkled on, the trees and fountains of a beautiful garden beyond whose lofty walls appeared the dwellings and towers of a mighty city. Already the low roar of its traffic reached them while hurrying on their clothes to join their companions in the spacious grounds where they were trained in wrestling, throwing blocks of wood at each other to acquire agility in dodging the missiles, the skilful use of the bow, and various other exercises

for the development of bodily strength and grace.

A few minutes later the two brothers, Smerdis and Otanes, with scores of other lads, ranging in age from seven to fourteen years, were assembled in a vast playground, surrounded on all sides by a lofty wall.

The playground of a large boarding-school?

It almost might be called so, but the pupils of this boarding-school were educated free of expense to their parents, and it received only the sons of the highest nobles in the land. This playground was attached to the palace of Darius, King of Persia, who reigned twenty-four hundred years ago, and these chosen boys had been taken from their homes, as they reached the age of six years, to be reared "at his gate," as the language of the country expressed it.

Otanes and Smerdis were sons of one of the highest officers of the court, the "ear of the king," or, as he would now be called, the Minister of Police. Handsome little fellows of eleven and twelve, with blue eyes, fair complexions, and curling yellow locks, their long training in all sorts of physical exercises had made them stronger and hardier than most lads of their age in our time. Though reared in a palace, at

one of the most splendid courts the world has ever seen, the boys were expected to endure the hardships of the poorest laborer's children. Instead of the gold and silver bedsteads used by the nobles, they were obliged to sleep on the floor; if the court was at Babylon, they were forced to make long marches under the burning sun of Asia, and if, to escape the intense heat, the king removed to his summer palaces at Ecbatana and Pasargadæ, situated in the mountainous regions of Persia, where it was often bitterly cold, the boys were ordered to bathe in the icy water of the rivers flowing from the heights. In place of the dainty dishes and sweetmeats for which Persian cooks were famous, they were allowed nothing but bread water, and a little meat; sometimes to accustom them to hardship they were deprived entirely of food for a day, or even longer.

On this morning the exercises seemed specially long to the two brothers, full of anticipations of pleasure; but finally the last block of wood was hurled, the last arrow shot, the last wrestling match ended, and the boys, bearing a sealed roll of papyrus, containing a leave of absence for one day, hurried off towards home.

Their father's palace stood at no great distance from the royal residence, on the long, wide street, extending straight to the city gates, and like the houses of all the Persian nobles, was surrounded by a beautiful walled garden called a paradise, laid out with flower-beds of roses, poppies, oleanders, ornamental plants adorned with fountains, and shaded by lofty trees.

The hunting party was nearly ready to start, and the courtyard was thronged. Servants rushed to and fro bearing shields, swords, lances, bows and lassos, for a hunter was always equipped with bow and arrows, two lances, a sword and a shield. Others held in leash the dogs to be used in starting the game.

The enormous preserves in the neighborhood of Babylon were well-stocked with animals, including stags, wild boars, and a few lions. Several noblemen clad in the plain hunting costume always worn in the chase, were already mounted, among them the father of the two lads, who greeted them affectionately as they respectfully approached and kissed his hand.

"Make haste, boys, your horses are ready. Take only bows and shields — the swords and lances

will be in your way; you must not try to deal with larger game than you can manage with your arrows."

"May we not carry daggers in our belts too, father?" cried Otanes eagerly. "They can't be in our way, and if we should meet a lion" —

A laugh from the group of nobles interrupted him. "Your son seeks large game, Intaphernes!" exclaimed a handsome officer. "He must have better weapons than a bow and dagger, if" —

The rest of the sentence was drowned by the noise in the courtyard, but as the party rode towards the gate Intaphernes looked back: "Yes, take the daggers, it can do no harm. Keep with Candaules."

The old slave, a gray-haired, but muscular man, with several other attendants, joined the lads, and the long train passed out into the street and toward the city gates. Otanes hastily whispered his brother: "Keep close by me, Smerdis; if only we catch sight of a lion, we'll show what we can do with bows and arrows.

The sun was now several hours high, and the streets, lined with tall brick houses, were crowded with people — artisans, slaves, soldiers, nobles and citizens, the

latter clad in white linen shirts, gay woollen tunics and short cloaks. Two-wheeled wooden vehicles, drawn by horses decked with bells and tassels, litters containing veiled women borne by slaves, and now and then, the superb gilded carriage, hung with silk curtains, of some royal princess passed along. Here and there a heavily laden camel moved slowly by, and the next instant a soldier of the king's bodyguard dashed past in his superb uniform — a gold cuirass, purple surcoat, and high Persian cap, the gold scabbard of his sword and the gold apple on his lance-tip flashing in the sun.

High above the topmost roofs of even the lofty towers on the walls rose the great sanctuary of the Magi,* the immense Temple of Bel, visible in all quarters of the city, and seen for miles from every part of the flat plain on which Babylon stood. The huge staircase wound like a serpent round and round the outside of the building to the highest story, which contained the sanctuary itself and also the observatory whence the priests studied the stars.

Otanes and Smerdis, chatting eagerly together, rode

*The Magi were the Persian priests.

THE BOYS HURRIED OFF TOWARD HOME.

on as fast as the crowd would permit, and soon reached one of the gates in the huge walls that defended the city. These walls, seventy-five feet high, and wide enough to allow two chariots to drive abreast, were strengthened by two hundred and fifty towers, except on one side, where deep marshes extended to their base. Beyond these marshes lay the hunting-grounds, and the party, turning to the left, rode for a time over a smooth highway, between broad tracts of land sown with wheat, barley and sesame. Slender palm-trees covered with clusters of golden dates were seen in every direction, and the sunbeams shimmered on the canals and ditches which conducted water from the Euphrates to all parts of the fields.

Otanes' horse suddenly shied violently as a rider, mounted on a fleet steed, and carrying a large pouch, dashed by like the wind.

"One of the Augari bearing letters to the next station!" exclaimed Smerdis. "See how he skims along. Hi! If I were not to be one of the king's bodyguard, I'd try for an Augar's place. How he goes! He's almost out of sight already."

"How far apart are the stations?" asked Otanes.

"Eighteen miles. And when he gets there, he'll just toss the letter bag to the next man, who is sitting on a fresh horse waiting for it, and away *he'll* go like lightning. That's the way the news is carried to the very end of the empire of our lord the King."

"Must be fine fun," replied Otanes. "But see, there's the gate of the hunting-park. Now for the lion," he added gayly.

"May Ormuzd* save you from meeting one, my young master," said the old servant Candaules. "Luckily it's broad daylight, and they are more apt to come from their lairs after dark. Better begin with smaller game and leave the lion and wild boars to your father."

"Not if we catch sight of them," cried Otanes, settling his shield more firmly on his arm, and urging his horse to a quicker pace, for the head of the long train of attendants had already disappeared amid the dark cypress-trees of the hunting park. The immense enclosure stretching from the edge of the morasses that bordered the walls of Babylon far into the country, soon echoed with the shouts of the attendants

* The principal god of the Persians.

beating the coverts for game, the baying of the dogs, the hiss of lances and whir of arrows. Bright-hued birds, roused by the tumult, flew wildly hither and thither, now and then the superb plumage of a bird of paradise flashing like a jewel among the dense foliage of cypress and nut-trees.

Hour after hour sped swiftly away; the party had dispersed in different directions, following the course of the game; the sun was sinking low, and the slaves were bringing the slaughtered birds and beasts to the wagons used to convey them home. A magnificent stag was among the spoil, and a fierce wild boar, after a long struggle, had fallen under a thrust from Intaphernes's lance.

The shrill blast of the Median trumpet sounded thrice, to give the first of the three signals for the scattered hunters to meet at the appointed place, near the entrance of the park, and the two young brothers who, attended by Candaules and half a dozen slaves, had ridden far into the shady recesses of the woods, reluctantly turned their horses' heads. No thought of disobeying the summons entered their minds — Persian boys were taught that next to truth and cour-

age, obedience was the highest virtue, and rarely was a command transgressed.

They had had a good day's sport; few arrows remained in their quivers, and the attendants carried bunches of gay plumaged birds and several small animals, among them a pretty little fawn. "Let's go nearer the marshes; there are not so many trees, and we can ride faster," said Otanes as the trumpet-call was repeated, and the little party turned in that direction, moving more swiftly as they passed out upon the strip of open ground between the thicket and the marshes. The sun was just setting. The last crimson rays, shimmering on the pools of water standing here and there in the morasses, cast reflections on the tall reeds and rushes bordering their margins

Suddenly a pretty spotted fawn darted in front of the group, and crossing the open ground, vanished amid a thick clump of reeds. "What a nice pet the little creature would make for our sister Hadessah!" cried Otanes eagerly. "See! it has hidden among the reeds; we might take it alive. Go with Candaules and the slaves, Smerdis, and form a half-circle beyond the clump. When you're ready, whistle, and I'll ride

straight down and drive it towards you; you can easily catch it then.' We are so near the entrance of the park now that we shall have plenty of time; the third signal hasn't sounded yet."

Smerdis instantly agreed to the plan. The horses were fastened to some trees, and the men cautiously made a wide circuit, passed the bed of reeds, and concealed themselves behind the tall rushes beyond. A low whistle gave Otanes the signal to drive out the fawn.

Smerdis and the slaves saw the lad straighten himself in the saddle, and with a shout, dash at full speed towards the spot where the fawn had vanished. He had almost reached it when the stiff stalks shook violently, and a loud roar made them all spring to their feet. They saw the brave boy check his horse and fit an arrow to the string, but as he drew the bow, there was a stronger rustle among the reeds; a tawny object flashed through the air, striking Otanes from his saddle, while the horse, free from its rider, dashed, snorting with terror, towards the park entrance.

"A lion! A lion!" shrieked the trembling slaves, but Smerdis, drawing his dagger, ran towards the

place where his brother had fallen, passing close by the body of the fawn which lay among the reeds with its head crushed by a blow from the lion's paw. Candaules followed close at the lad's heels.

Parting the thick growth of stalks, they saw, only a few paces off, Otanes, covered with blood, lying motionless on the ground, and beside him the dead body of a half-grown lion, the boy's arrow buried in one eye, while the blood still streamed from a lance-wound in the animal's side.

Smerdis, weeping, threw himself beside his brother, and at the same moment Intaphernes, with several nobles and attendants, attracted by the cries, dashed up to the spot. The father, springing from the saddle, bent, and laid his hand on the boy's heart.

"It is beating still, and strongly too!" he exclaimed. "Throw water in his face! perhaps".—

Without finishing the sentence, he carefully examined the motionless form. "Ormuzd be praised! He has no wound; the blood has flowed from the lion. See, Prexaspes, there is a lance-head sticking in its side. I believe it's the very beast you wounded early in the day."

THE HUNTING PARTY WERE NEARLY READY TO START.

The officer whose laugh had so vexed Otanes, stooped over the dead lion and looked at the broken shaft.

"Ay, it's my weapon; the beast probably made its way to the morass for water; but, by Mithras!* the lad's arrow killed the brute; the barb passed through the eyeball into the brain."

"Yes, my lord," cried old Candaules eagerly, "and doubtless it was only the weight of the animal, which, striking my young master as it made its spring, hurled him from the saddle and stunned him. See! he is opening his eyes. Otanes, Otanes, you've killed the lion!"

The boy's eyelids fluttered, then slowly rose, his eyes wandered over the group, and at last rested on the dead lion. The old slave's words had evidently reached his ear, for with a faint smile he glanced archly at Prexaspes, and raising himself on one elbow, said:

"You see, my lord — even with a bow and dagger!"

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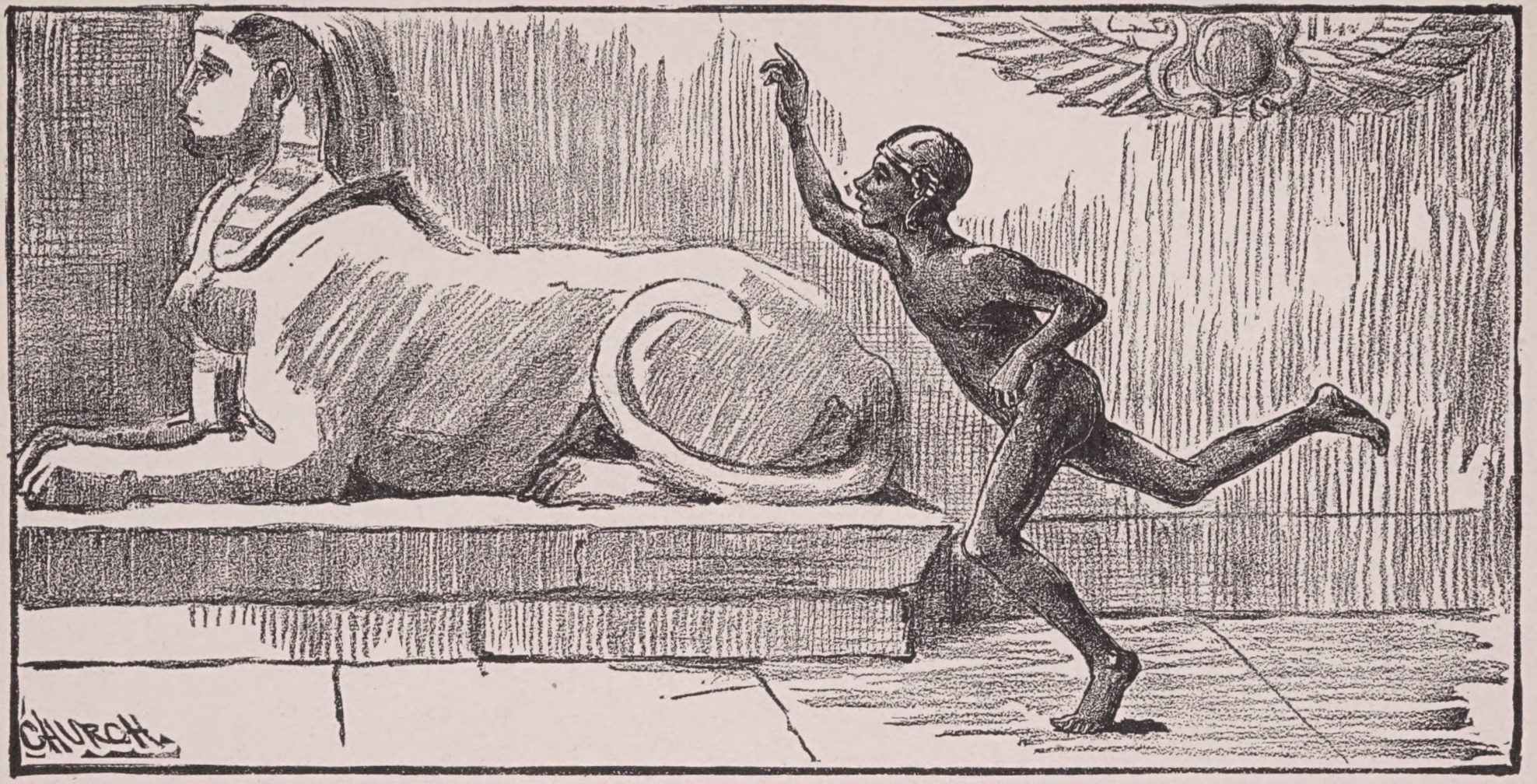
*The Persian god of the sun.

BOYS B. C.

U-BA-RES! Bu-ba-r-e-e-e-e-s!" shrilly shouted a little fellow whose bare brown body glittered in the sun like a bronze statue suddenly endowed with life, as he scampered at full speed down the long street.

Another lad, equally brown and equally bare, turned at the call, screamed at the top of his lungs, "Hi! Psamtik, is that you?" and ran back to meet his playmate, very much as two ten-year-old boys in Boston or New York would do, though these lads lived more than two thousand years ago, when people



DOWN THE LONG STREET.

reckoned their time B. C. instead of A. D.; and their home was Sais, in Egypt, the royal residence of the Pharaohs.

Psamtik threw one arm lovingly over his companion's shoulder, exclaiming eagerly,

"Oh! Bubares, there's a first-rate magician going to perform in the fore-court of the little temple near the city of the dead. He swallows fire, they say, and pulls ribbons out of a fellow's nose, and — and — oh, does all sorts of things. Will you go with me, Bubares?"

"Of course I will. Don't I always go wherever you do? Must we hurry?"

"No, there's plenty of time."

The two boys walked briskly on, the hot African sun beating fiercely down on their naked bodies. The absence of clothing was not noticed. Why should it be? Many Egyptian children went wholly unclad, as many a little one in America runs barefoot during the warm summer days.

The street down which they passed was long and straight. The houses, built of bricks made from the mud of the Nile, were often five stories high; the

pictures and hieroglyphics on their walls, and their carved wooden balconies, gayly painted, and supported by pillars, also brightly painted, gave them a pleasant, cheerful aspect. The roofs were flat, and adorned with such a profusion of shrubs and flowers that they resembled gardens floating in the air. Here families spent the warm evenings, playing chequers or talking, unless the mosquitoes swarming upward from the Nile proved too troublesome and drove them to a small turret called a "mosquito tower," with which every well-to-do citizen's house was supplied. There they were safe, and could look down at their ease on the little pests buzzing beneath; for these insects flew too low to reach their airy perch. Everything was wonderfully neat: the door-plates and knockers fairly glittered in the sun, the pillars and balconies seemed to have just received a fresh coat of paint, and even the pavement looked as if it had been newly scoured.

It was long after noon; the air was beginning to grow cooler and the bustle in the streets increased. Gilded chariots thronged along drawn by horses with plumes nodding on their heads, and manes clipped

so closely that they stood up along their necks like stiff crests; others followed to which were harnessed milk-white oxen with splendid trappings; camels patiently bearing heavy loads on their backs, and horsemen prancing on magnificent steeds, passed along, while the lads were constantly jostled by merchants and soldiers in white robes edged with colored fringes, whose width marked the rank of the wearer; by brawny laborers whose only garment was a short apron; by women of the lower classes, and slaves, and naked children. Many, alas! of those they met were blind, for the dazzling suns and hot dry winds of Egypt have always been very injurious to the eyes. Others were crippled or maimed. The Egyptian laws were severe, and the highest rank would not shelter a man who committed any crime. So when the lads saw a person without ears, they knew he had been a spy; the loss of the right hand marked a forger, and high treason was punished by cutting out the tongue. Such sights were not uncommon, and the little friends were talking about the wonderful magician too busily to notice them.

Sais was built on a hillside sloping to the Nile,

and the streets near its banks were bright and cheerful, lined with handsome houses, temples and palaces; but as the boys went on further from the river, the dwellings grew smaller and smaller, at last dwindling to huts made of accacia boughs and mud, with only here and there a more respectable building.

Suddenly Psamtik started: a faint mew was heard, and a gray kitten darted from under his feet and ran off at full speed. Both lads glanced timidly around them, their brown faces turning several shades paler; but no one was near, and with a sigh of relief, Psamtik said,

"What a piece of good luck! I might have killed the kitten! I never saw it at all till I stepped on its tail."

The little fellows had excellent cause for fear. If any one in Egypt injured a cat, whether intentionally or otherwise, he was liable to severe punishment; whoever killed one was put to death. No throwing stones at poor puss or ill-treatment of her of any kind was allowed there. Nay, if fire broke out in a house, the Egyptians saved their cats before trying to extinguish the flames.

Bubares shrugged his shoulders: "Ugh, my back is sore yet from the beating my father gave me a week ago because, while running across the court-yard to get my ball, I tripped and fell on our old Mau. How she did mew! She limped for three days after. Wasn't I frightened? Psamtik,"—he lowered his voice and looked cautiously around to be sure he was not overheard,—"I wish they'd *all* go to the temple of Bast* and stay there."

"Oh, hush, hush, Bubares! if anybody should hear—"

Before he could finish the sentence the two boys turned the corner of the deserted street, and entered a square, surrounded by open booths, where carpenters, tailors, joiners, weavers, butchers and bakers were all pursuing their various trades.

Some of the bakers' men were busily kneading dough, using their feet for the coarser kinds of bread and their hands for the finer. Others were drawing from the oven loaves both round and square, and

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*Bast was the goddess to whose temple, every year at the time of her great festival, the Egyptians were allowed to take the over-supply of cats, and leave them in the charge of the priests. She was represented with a cat's head.

small rolls baked in the shape of snails, sheep, or hearts. — Boys packed the bread in baskets which they carried on their heads to customers in different parts of the city.

"Oh, how good that smells!" said Bubares, as one of these boys passed with five baskets piled one above another on his head. "Wouldn't I like to give him a push and see all the bread go rolling on the ground? Which kind do you like best, Psamtik?"

"The snails. But I won't say so at home, for they laugh and tell me I'm growing just like them, fat and slow. My sister Cleopatra will eat nothing but hearts, since it has been settled that she is to marry your brother Sebak."

"That's just the way with Sebak," cried Bubares, laughing. "He says the hearts are crisper than the snails and sheep. For my part, I like the sheep best. I wish we had —"

"Quick, quick!" interrupted Psamtik. "Let's run. See the people crowding into the court of the little temple yonder. I'm afraid we're late."

They darted swiftly across the square, slipped through the throng like eels, and entered the court

THE BUSTLE IN THE STREETS INCREASED.

of the temple, from whence a confused noise filled the air — shouts of joy from the children, screams and angry ejaculations from men and women pushed rudely to and fro, and one voice, louder than all the others, rising above the din, as it called monotonously,

"Come to the fore-court of the temple and see the great magician, endowed with wondrous power by Hermes, giver of all wise counsels."

Bubares and Psamtik made their way to the front, spite of many an angry push and cry of "Out of the way, boy!" "Why do you crowd so?" "Out of the way, I tell you!"

A man, so tall and stout that he looked almost a giant, stood in the court, surrounded by various chests and boxes, and attended by several negro servants.

Snakes of different colors and sizes, but all poisonous, lay in coils around his chest and limbs.

Bowing courteously to his audience, he seized two of the largest, and holding them close to his face, teased them until they bit him so fiercely that the blood flowed down his cheeks. Next he took a

flute and began to play. The serpents rose nearly erect, swayed gracefully to and fro, keeping time to the notes of the music, and went through the motions of a dance. The magician spat into their jaws. Instantly all grew as stiff as rods, and flinging them on the ground, where they lay motionless, he danced wildly among them, but carefully avoided touching a single snake.

Excited by the cheers and applause of the crowd, he leaped higher and higher, straining every nerve and muscle, his eyes fairly starting from their sockets; then suddenly dropping on the ground, lay as if lifeless.

After some minutes he uttered a low whistle. The snakes stirred, lifted their heads, hissed in reply, and creeping slowly towards their master, twined around his limbs and body in a network of shining coils. The magician continued to lie motionless for a time, but rose at last, gradually unwound the slimy folds of the reptiles, and put nearly all in the chests and boxes, reserving a few to wear as necklaces and bracelets around his throat and arms.

Resuming his performance, he swallowed fire, danced

THE MAGICIAN IN THE FORE-COURT OF THE TEMPLE.

while balancing swords whose points rested in the hollows under his eyes, as East Indian conjurers do at the present day; then bending towards Bubares, who had forced his way with Psamtik to the very front rank of the throng and was eagerly watching the wonderful magician's every movement, suddenly passed his hand over the boy's face, saying,

"Why, my lad, you're fond of red ribbon. But you must not keep it in your nose. Here, I'll pull it out."

Thereupon he began to draw yard after yard of bright red ribbon from the tip of Bubares' nose, winding it around the lad till his brown body and limbs looked as if they were striped with scarlet.

The magician next placed seven large ostrich eggs on the ground before him, and taking one after another, deftly cracked each at a single blow, releasing a pretty white pink-eyed rabbit.

The crowd shouted with delight; but in the midst of the noise a terrible shriek attracted all eyes to Psamtik, who was hopping on one foot and screaming for help. A snake, which had evidently made its escape from one of the boxes, was coiled around the boy's ankle, its fangs fixed in his leg. The

magician hastily approached, uttered his peculiar whistle, and held out his hand. The reptile instantly left Psamtik and coiled in a living bracelet around its master's muscular arm.

"Isis be praised! it's not the asp," said the latter quietly. "Call a doctor; the boy won't die if he has speedy help."

A few moments after, a tall figure clad in the white robes of a priest,* came to Psamtik, carefully examined the wound, applied an ointment, murmuring some mysterious words while binding it on, and said the patient must be carried home—it might cause inflammation if he walked.

The magician ordered one of his negro slaves to lift the boy, and Bubares ran by his side to show the way. Passing swiftly through the streets, they reached a pleasant house not far from the river, where the negro set Psamtik down, and instantly disappeared, perhaps fearing the wrath of the lad's father.

There was a scene of great confusion when the story was told. A serpent's bite was a terror to

* The Egyptian physicians belonged to the caste of priests.

the dwellers on the Nile, and not until the end of several hours, when Psamtik still protested that since the application of the ointment he had felt no pain, would the anxious mother permit the two boys — Bubares had obtained permission to spend the night with his friend — to go to rest.

An American boy would think Psamtik's bed far from comfortable. It was simply a step, six feet long and two high, built of bricks. On this lay a wool mattress, and coverlets were heaped above, forming a couch which to the little Egyptians seemed very luxurious. They had no occasion to spend much time in undressing. Bubares unwound the scarlet ribbon which in the confusion attending Psamtik's accident nobody had thought of removing, and slipped into bed beside his friend.

The two lads chatted awhile about the events of the day, but their voices grew fainter and fainter. At last Bubares murmured drowsily:

"Psamtik, the serpent must have bitten you because you trod on the kitten's tail. The goddess Bast was angry."

"Hush, hush, Bubares: don't let any one know.

I will pray the great Bast to forgive me," replied Psamtik.

Silence followed. A moment more and the little fellows were in the land of dreams.

A FOREIGN EMBASSY.

NESTLED in a secluded nook between two ranges of billowy hills, with one dormer window commanding a bend of the Hudson, but with its ample porch facing the gorge which led like a steep staircase to the wilderness, stood for many years the hunting lodge of Peter Van Vechten.

It had a wild, solitary look, and yet there were signs of comfort and even of luxury about the place. Its lonely situation might have been the choice of either a very happy or of a grief-stricken man. At all events it was the hermitage of a man who loved to live apart from the world. The broad carriage-drive which swept up to the hospitable porch was grass-grown and had lost all signs of ruts of wheels. Only hoof-prints

here and there told that Peter Van Vechten was as fond of the hunt as ever, and that his daughter Lilian often rode to the hounds with him.

He had been a kind and true father to his little girl, almost too indulgent for her own best good, parting with her company much of the time that she might acquire an elegant education in the city, and living a lonely life with only his three hounds as companions. At length Lilian's education was pronounced finished, and she returned to the Lodge. The little window that kept watch over the Hudson was her own, and she would look at the passengers flitting by in the swift-winged schooners on their way to Albany or New York, for this was before the time of steamboats or rail-car. It was very dull at the Lodge, in spite of rides upon her pony, and the harpsichord which her father loved to listen to in the evening. He had a rich full voice and sometimes joined her in

"My heart's in the highlands."

He escorted her in her calls at the stately old manor-houses, and once in a great while a venerable

coach rattled up to their own door and a Madam Livingston or Van Cortland, or a Miss Verplanck would make a dignified visit at the Lodge.

There were the woods for botanizing and her embroidery frame for rainy days, but in spite of all this, Lilian was discontented. She could not have cared greatly for her father, and yet she was jealous of his pets, the three great dogs with their odd names: Prince, Peace and Prosper; so-called, their master explained, because if you held fast to Principle, Peace and Prosperity would follow. Prince was in fact the leader of the little pack, and if you held him well in leash, the others never wandered. Peace was a quiet inoffensive dog, a poor hunter, with a loving disposition and a melting eye. Old Prosper was always lucky, and would come leaping back with the game lightly, but securely held in his deep jaws, while Prince looked on with the air of a commanding general.

Lilian wondered that her father could be so happy in the society of these dumb friends. His easy-going temper grated against her ambitious spirit. She chafed at the Lodge, not so much because she was

lonely and longed for pleasant companionship, for friends to love, for opportunities to do good, as that her proud, imperious nature longed for continual admiration. She did not care whether anyone really loved her, provided she could be envied, praised and flattered.

When winter began she moped and sulked, and fancied herself the most unhappy girl in the world, until early in December an invitation came from an aunt in Philadelphia, urging her to spend two months in that city. Philadelphia was then the seat of government, and a gay and fashionable centre. Lilian was delighted. She did not ask herself whether her father might not be lonely in her absence, nor did she for a moment suspect that he had written her aunt requesting this invitation — she was simply overjoyed to leave the Lodge and to think that new dresses and invitations to routs and parties awaited her.

But even in Philadelphia Lilian was not quite happy. The society in which she was thrown was political, and young ladies were honored quite as much from their fathers' positions as for their own grace or beauty. It was mortifying to Lilian to see

"GONE AWAY."

Miss Van Rensselaer of Albany leading the contra dance, just because, as she told her jealous heart, Miss Van Rensselaer's papa was a great man. How provoking, too, to count Edith Verplanck's bouquets and the admirers hovering round Gertrude Van Cortland's chair! She was sure Cora Livingston's entrance would not have caused such a sensation if her father had not recently been appointed Minister to France. No one had heard of Peter Van Vechten, and she asked herself with tears in her eyes why her father had not done something to render himself famous and confer distinction upon his family.

Her two months stretched into four, but she returned to the Lodge more discontented than ever. Her father greeted her gladly. He had employed himself in her absence in making alterations in the house which he thought would please her fancy; and he proposed to invite Gertrude Van Cortland to pass the summer with her. Lilian declined the offer ungraciously, and met all her father's efforts for her pleasure with an ungrateful manner which refused to be pleased with anything. Her father was very considerate and gentle in these days; he did not reprove

or reproach her, but seemed to be silently trying to find the way to his daughter's heart. There was a tender yearning in the furtive way in which he watched her, a glad flushing of the cheek whenever she chanced to bestow on him a careless caress. He was not well and had given up hunting; but he went into society more than formerly, and Lilian could not help noticing when she entered a drawing-room leaning upon his arm, that there was a little lull in conversation and people looked at him admiringly. He was a handsome man with his abundant gray hair and fine soldierly figure — she contrasted him thankfully with stout little Mr. Van Rensselaer, and felt that she would be proud of him even in a Philadelphia assemblage of diplomats and dignitaries. If only she could hear his name called with some high-sounding title attached! Perhaps it was not too late even now. "Father," she asked one day as they rode through the wood together, "why don't you go into politics?"

He leaned forward and gently caressed the head of one of the hounds with the handle of his riding-whip. "If I went into politics, Lilian," he replied, "I would

have to leave the Lodge and perhaps bid farewell to Principle, Peace and Prosperity."

Lilian thought of the words only as the names of the dogs. "I don't see why you are so attached to them," she replied, "I was so ashamed all last winter to have people say when I was introduced, 'Van Vechten, it seems to me I knew your father — let me see — wasn't he a member of Congress for ——' or 'are you the daughter of Colonel or of Judge Van Vechten.' Then some of the Philadelphia families are descended from earls and dukes, and have coats of arms emblazoned on the panels of their coaches. I never could find that any of *our* family were noble: — and one or two of the girls have been to England and have been presented at court. Edith Verplanck showed me an amber satin dress she wore at a royal reception, to which she was invited just because her father had been sent on a diplomatic mission. *I* don't seem to have *anything* to be proud of!"

Lilian's father glanced aside. "I am sorry you have had occasion to be ashamed of your father," he said quietly.

The girl's better nature asserted itself for the

moment. "I never could be ashamed of you, dear, kind father," she cried impulsively. "It is just because you are so much more worthy than other men that I fret that you are not recognized. I should think our country would feel honored to be able to point to you as its minister in some European city. I am every bit as proud of you as Cora Livingston is of her father — she always looked so aggravatingly happy when people praised him to her."

"But Lilian, if I were to be sent upon a foreign mission, perhaps I could not take you with me. How would you like being left behind?"

"I should not mind it in the least," Lilian exclaimed thoughtlessly. "I should hear people praising you, and so would Cora and Gertrude and the other girls; and I could hold up my head with any of them."

"And you would not mind if I were to spend the rest of my days in Turkey or India?"

"You would not have to spend your whole life there, would you?" Lilian asked; "if you did, couldn't you find some way for me to join you?"

"And leave Philadelphia? are you sure that you would care to?"

"Why of course, dear father."

"Even if it were a half civilized post, something like the Lodge?"

"Yes indeed; and to prove it I'll not leave you this winter. I am afraid I have been a selfish daughter, and I will give up Philadelphia if you wish it."

A smile of infinite content crossed Peter Van Vechten's face, but he shook his head. "No, no, the sacrifice would be too great — you enjoy Philadelphia even though you are not a grandee's daughter, and you shall go again this winter."

Lilian had forgotten this conversation, when just before leaving for her second winter with her aunt, as the stage was climbing the hill and the servant carrying out her little cow-skin covered trunk and well corded cedarn boxes, her father took her hand and spoke hurriedly as though moved by sudden impulse: "And Lilian one last word: if I should obtain a foreign mission and go away — I know you love me child, but don't grieve — I'll manage some way to send for you, so be glad of my promotion."

Lilian was delighted; was it possible that her

father was keeping back a secret as a glad surprise for her some day! She kissed him rapturously, sprang into the coach, and waving a pretty silk-mittened hand to the lonely man standing there with the dogs capering about him and striving in vain to console him, she rolled gaily away toward Philadelphia.

Very touching and tender were the letters which came to Lilian in the early winter, they were brief however, and infrequent, and sometimes, in a pause in the gay whirl of excitement in which she found herself, Lilian would wonder why her father wrote so seldom. Perhaps he was busy with negotiations in regard to the foreign ministry or embassy. He referred to it sometimes in a sentence like this:

"Don't be ashamed of your old father; a prospect of high honor opens before him;" or "When I am gone don't forsake Principle, and may Peace and Prosperity never desert you."

Occasionally he spoke of a "long journey;" but though Lilian wrote enthusiastically, or curiously, and begged him to confide his projects to her, he kept his secret well.

One dismal day in February Lilian was quite alone.

Her aunt was slightly ill and kept her room. A fine sleety rain drove against the windows, and the room was damp and chill. She seated herself at the harpsichord and played the old melodies which her father loved to hear. She was singing:

"My heart's in the highlands,
My heart is not here,"

when a servant handed her a letter. It was from her father, but in such a cramped and trembling hand that she hardly recognized it.

"DEAREST LILIAN, (it ran)

The message has come at last. I have received my commission, and must leave soon for a far country. I have dreaded the passage, but now I am contented. I long only to see you before I go. I fear that you may be unhappy without me; but be comforted — we shall not be long separated. '*I go to prepare a place for you that where I am there you may be also.*' Come quickly to bid me good-bye, for I may be summoned at any moment. It is a great honor, and I am very happy. Take care of Principle for me, and may Peace and Prosper be yours, always.

Your loving

FATHER."

When Lilian's aunt read the letter she looked pale

and frightened. "You must go at once, poor child," she said.

"Of course," Lilian replied, and hurriedly prepared for her journey. How odd, she thought, that her father had not mentioned the name of the foreign country to which he was sent. No matter, it was enough to know that the embassy was an honorable and an important one. She had always been proud of her father; she was not surprised that he should be chosen for such a mission; and now her delighted imagination pictured the homage which she would receive as the daughter of a foreign minister. Her father need not have feared that she would miss him — she had grown accustomed to their separation and it did not pain her. He had said that she should come too. She hoped the station would prove gay and interesting, one of the principal capitals of Europe, and she almost regretted her rash expression of willingness to follow her father to some remote exile.

The stage left her at the wayside tavern a half a mile from the Lodge. She was surprised not to find her father here to meet her, and questioned the innkeeper, who seemed embarrassed at meeting her.

"Your father has gone away, Miss," he stammered.

"Is it possible?" Lilian cried; "am I too late? He must have been sent for suddenly."

"Yes Miss, he was took very sudden, at the last," replied the man.

There was nothing to do but to climb the hill, vexed that she had had her journey for nothing, and wondering what messages her father might have left for her with the housekeeper.

As she opened the gate, Peace laid his great muzzle affectionately against her hand, and Prince leaped joyfully; but old Prosper only looked toward the house and howled. So preoccupied was she with her own thoughts that it was not until she stood upon the very threshold that she noticed a long scarf of crape which fluttered from the knocker.

Then all the awful force of the words, "Gone away," struck the girl. Her grief was intensified by her remorse for her selfish behavior, and for a time she wept for her father as one who could not be comforted. He had been very ill, so the housekeeper told her, all winter; but he would not allow any one to alarm Lilian. He wrote to her from time to time

when quite unable to do so. He spoke of her lovingly but refused to have her sent for.

He had said once, after reading one of her eager questioning letters asking where he was going, "Tell her this is the guide-book. She will find the city all described here."

Lilian took up the worn Bible and found a mark at the passage:

"*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.*"

Then she remembered that her father had said that she should join him some day, and she knew how little she deserved such an honor as this. She lacked the graces suited to the daughter of an ambassador to the Heavenly City. She remembered that Cora Livingston had said, "I have to be very careful of my conduct — my father's position demands it;" and that Edith Verplanck had told her that she was more frightened than glad when she knew that she was to be presented at court, for she feared that she might make some mistake in etiquette in the presence of the king.

"The King of that world" — thought Lilian; and she sat herself earnestly to a study of the code of sweet and gentle courtesy which made Christ "the most perfect gentleman of all time;" and to the acquirement of accomplishments which she might carry with her sometime when she joined the celestial embassy. Little by little the spirit of Christ grew within her, she became more meek and loving and trusting, and serving her king, she became widely known among the poor and suffering as the "kindly lady."

An embroidered satin picture, of the kind that were fashionable when our grandmothers were young, hangs still over the little mantle of the chamber overlooking the Hudson, and on a species of memorial tablet which adorns its centre, is delicately worked in faded silk this stanza:

"My boast is not that I deduced my birth
From kings enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretentions rise,
The child of parents passed into the skies."

I talked in this room with a bent old woman, who, in her girlhood days had been the dressing maid of aged Mistress Van Vechten. "Her senses failed

her at the last," said the old tiring-woman, "for she took a strange notion that she was the daughter of a foreign embassador. She grew restless like — and used to say that she wanted to go to 'the embassy.' She had always been so simple-minded and unostentatious that it seemed all the queerer to see her taking such a high fancy. The very dumb animals loved her. I've heard her repeat the names of a pack of hounds that used to belong to her father. 'Peace and Prosper,' she'd say; 'keep Principle and you'll always have Peace and Prosper.' She was a dear, kind lady. The night before she left us, she came out of her room. 'Get my best brocade, Calisty,' says she, 'I am going to the embassy. My white brocade with the gold-thread figure — I must look my best — in the presence of the king.' Then she let me put her to bed as peaceable as a child; but about midnight she sat up. 'It's my turn, Calisty,' she cried, her voice all trembling with happiness, 'it's my turn, — didn't you hear the usher call Ambassador Van Vechten's daughter?' "

"I lighted a candle as quick as I could; the dear soul was gone."

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